

The Wars with the Samnites

The Samnites were a loose confederation of peoples living in the Apennine Mountains southeast of Rome. Their soldiers were tough, for their life in the mountains demanded courage and afforded little of civilization's amenities. In 343 B.C. the Samnites attacked a group of people called the Sidicini, who then sought the help of their powerful neighbors in Campania, a wealthy and fertile region south of Latium; Campania's largest city was Capua, a city regarded by the Romans as wealthy, luxurious, decadent, and effeminate. Capua and Campania joined the Sidicini in an alliance against the Samnites, but their combined forces were not enough to withstand the enemy; Capua itself and Campania were soon attacked by the Samnites and in great danger of being taken over.

The citizens of Capua then asked the Romans for help against the Samnites. The Romans, doubting the sincerity of this emergency appeal, and citing the treaty and alliance that Rome already had with the Samnites, told the Campanians that they could do little against the Samnites, who were their friends. Nonetheless, the Romans said, they would send envoys to the Samnites and ask them to leave Capua and Campania alone.

The envoys of the Capuans and Campanians were distraught. To save their city, the envoys simply gave Capua and Campania to the Romans, reasoning that thus the Romans would have to protect their own property. The Romans now had a substantial excuse for not allowing the Samnites to take Campania. They already had a reason: They did not want the powerful nation of the Samnites to have the additional resources of the fertile fields of Campania and the wealth of Capua. Accordingly the Romans sent envoys to the

Samnites to ask them not to continue the attack; otherwise the Romans would have to defend their subjects, the Campanians.

The Samnite ambassadors refused Rome's request. To further anger the Romans, the Samnite ambassadors even made a point of immediately shouting out the orders to attack Campania, so that the Roman ambassadors could hear. Both sides prepared for war. The Romans won the first battle, at Mount Gaurus, although with great difficulty; they had never encountered so tough and stubborn an enemy. The Romans also defeated the Samnites at Suessula and, in another battle, even stormed the Samnites' camp. They were unable to follow up their victories, however, because of a mutiny in the Roman army. The Samnites asked the Romans for peace, and the Romans, distracted by their own problems, granted them a treaty in 341 B.C.

THE GREAT LATIN WAR

In 358 B.C. the Latins had agreed to a treaty that recognized Rome's supremacy over them. Nevertheless, the Latins began to flex their muscles by waging war on their enemies without Rome's consent or troops. In 341 the Latins attacked the Samnites, with whom the Romans had recently made a treaty of alliance. The Samnites complained to the Romans about the Latins' attack on their territory. The Romans could do little to restrain the Latins at the moment, so they summoned the Latin leaders to a conference. Considering how much they had done to help Rome achieve its powerful position, the Latins demanded that one consul and half of the Senate be drawn from the Latins. The Romans were outraged at the Latins' demand for strict equality in government and declared war on them. Helping the Romans in their battles against their former allies the Latins were the Romans' new allies and former enemies, the Samnites. Helping the Latins against the Romans were the Campanians, who hated the Samnites.

The Roman consuls were nervous about the conflict, which was something of a civil war. The political ramifications were serious, for a victorious Latium could shatter Rome's power. The Latins not only spoke the same language as the Romans, but also used similar military equipment, formations, and strategies. The Latin soldiers

were formidable opponents. Doubtless too the consuls were nervous about their new allies, the Samnites, with whom they had been at war only a few years earlier. This battle was too important for sloppiness; the consuls therefore issued the order that no soldier was to leave his post to fight the enemy.

Titus Manlius Torquatus, the son of the Torquatus who had killed the huge Gaul (see chapter 10), was on reconnaissance when he happened to meet a Latin soldier whom he knew. The Latin baited Titus Manlius into engaging in a duel with him to show whether the Latin or the Roman cavalry was better; Titus Manlius, fearing he would appear a coward if he refused, accepted the challenge, knowing that in doing so he would be breaking the rules set by the consuls. The two men had their duel, and Titus Manlius won. He stripped the Latin of his armor and proudly rode back to his father, the consul.

"Father," he said, "so that everybody may say that I am my father's son, I bring back these cavalry spoils, taken from the knight whom I killed, after being challenged to a duel."

When the consul heard that, he immediately turned away from his son and ordered that the trumpet be sounded to summon the soldiers to an assembly. When the great crowd had assembled, he spoke:

"You, Titus Manlius, showed no respect either for the consul's power or for your father's authority when you, against our direct orders, deserted your post to fight the enemy, and when you, as much as was in your power, undermined the army discipline that, up to now, has made Rome strong. You have forced me to disregard the needs of either the country or myself. It will be better if we receive the punishment for our error than if the country is punished for our wrong; we will provide a sad, but beneficial, lesson to the youth of the future. I am moved by a father's natural love for his children, as well as by your show of courage, misguided though it was, by a false conception of glory. The consul's power must either be reestablished as inviolable with your death, or destroyed forever by your going unpunished; I therefore think that you (if there is any of my blood in you) will not object to restoring the military discipline which has fallen because of your mistake. Lictor, go and tie him to the stake." (Livy VIII.13-20)

Titus Manlius was then beheaded, as punishment for leaving his post.

Although the Romans won that hard-fought battle close to Mount Vesuvius, the Latins were not yet finished. The survivors regrouped, and more Latin soldiers joined them. They fought another battle against the Romans, this one at Trifanum. Again, the Romans won. The consuls then proceeded through all Latium and Campania, stamping out signs of revolt; Latium and Campania both surrendered. The Romans, however, were wisely gracious in their victory: They granted full Roman citizenship to many Latin and Campanian towns, making citizens of the recently conquered.

One of the cities Rome conquered during this time was Antium. The penalty that Antium paid to the Romans was the loss of its fleet. The prows (*rostra*, *rostrum* originally meant "beak, snout") were taken from the ships and used as decoration on a speaker's platform in the Forum. So the Latin word that originally meant "beak" and had changed to mean "the prow of a ship" came to mean, first in Latin and later in English, "a speaker's platform."

THE SECOND WAR WITH THE SAMNITES

The Romans' second war with the Samnites began with Palaepolis (Old City), a Greek city in Campania that lay close to Neapolis (New City) and may have been part of Neapolis. The Palaepolitans had attacked Rome's allies and had refused to pay reparations. The Palaepolitans no doubt were encouraged in their hostilities by the six thousand foreign soldiers (four thousand of whom were Samnites) who garrisoned their city.

As the Roman army arrived to attack the city, the citizens simultaneously surrendered to the Romans and tricked the Samnites into leaving. The Romans still had the Samnites to contend with, and defeated them in a battle. The rest of the war did not go so well.

DISASTER AT THE CAUDINE FORKS

In 321 B.C. the Roman army invaded Samnium. While the soldiers were raiding Samnite territory, shepherds grazing their

flocks in the vicinity reported to them that the Samnite army had left Samnium and was besieging the town of Luceria, which lay in the territory of Apulia, and was allied to the Romans. Two roads could lead the Romans to the relief of the Lucerians: one was long, with open plains to its sides; the other was short, but with mountains rising to either side. The Romans went by the short path, through an area called Caudium. They had proceeded some distance when they noticed that trees had been chopped down and boulders had been piled up to bar their progress. They turned around, only to find that the way by which they had entered the gorge was blocked, not only by trees that had been chopped down, but also by Samnite soldiers. The Romans had been led into a trap; the shepherds had been planted there by the Samnite commander, Gavius Pontius.

Pontius had not expected that his plan would go so well. He was unsure what to do and wrote a letter to his father, an experienced general, asking him for advice. His father's first reply was to let the Roman soldiers go, unharmed, as soon as possible. The son did not like that advice, so he wrote his father another letter; this time, his father advised him to put all the Roman soldiers to death.

Now the son was even more confused and thought that old age must have blunted his father's acumen. Still, he sent a wagon to bring his father to him so they could discuss the course of action. The father came and explained his advice: By the first plan, which he considered the better of the two, the Samnites would, by a magnanimous gesture, secure unending peace with that very powerful people; by the other plan, the Samnites would merely postpone war for many generations, since Rome would find it difficult to replace the two armies that had been lost. There was no third alternative.

The son rejected both solutions. He told his father of his solution: to release the Romans, but to force them to give up their weapons and possessions, and to pass under the yoke—a symbol of slavery and a great source of shame to soldiers. He would also require that the Romans withdraw their colonies and forces from Samnite territory, and that six hundred Roman *equites* be handed over to the Samnites as hostages.

The father, after listening to his son, said, "That plan of yours is one that doesn't make friends or remove enemies. Just watch out

for those whom you have enraged with public humiliation! Those men there are of the Roman race, which doesn't know how to give in, even when it has been conquered. The memory of whatever they are forced to do now will always remain branded in their hearts, and it will not allow them to rest until you have paid the penalty many times over" (Livy IX.3.12).

The father was right, but his son did not know it, and he proceeded with his plans for sending the Roman soldiers under the yoke.

First, they were ordered to lay down their weapons, and then to go outside the camp's walls, with only one article of clothing; then the first hostages were handed over and led away to their guards. Then the lictors were ordered to leave the consuls, and the consuls' military cloaks were torn off. This caused such great pity among the soldiers that those who only shortly before had been cursing the consuls and thinking that they should be handed over to the enemy for torture, now forgot their individual situations and turned their eyes away from the degradation of such great majesty, as if from something too abominable to be seen. The consuls, almost nude, were the first to be sent under the yoke. Then, as each was next in rank, so was he subjected to debasement and humiliation; then the legions passed, one by one, under the yoke. The armed Samnites stood around, calling them cowards and insulting them. They also threatened many with their swords, even wounding and killing those whose faces showed their bitterness at suffering such indignities and thereby offended their conquerors. (Livy IX.5.12–IX.6.2)

The second war with the Samnites had ended, in 321 B.C. One source says that the Romans reneged on their humiliating treaty and continued fighting from 316 to 314, but most historians believe that they abided by the terms.

In the following years, the Romans did not fight the Samnites again, but they did not remain inactive. They made alliances with the Samnites' neighbors, the most important being the region called Apulia. The Samnites were now surrounded by Rome's allies or subjects. The Romans were waiting for the opportunity to avenge the humiliating peace of the Caudine Forks.

The Samnites themselves offered Rome the opportunity to break the treaty between them, by attacking Rome's allies the Lucanians, who naturally asked Rome for help against the Samnites. Roman *fetials*, the priests whose duties included deciding upon the justice or injustice of a war, were sent to the Samnites to demand reparations for the injuries to the Lucanians, but were told by the Samnites' messengers that if they met any Samnite council they would not leave uninjured. The Romans then declared war on the Samnites, in 298 B.C.

The Romans experienced many successes in the early stages of the war. The consul Gnaeus Fulvius captured one of the Samnites' main towns, Bovianum; Roman armies took other towns, such as Romulea, Murgantia, and Ferentinum, and destroyed much of the Samnites' territory. The Samnites nonetheless did not give up; instead they instigated a general revolt of the Etruscans, Umbrians, Gauls, and other peoples Rome had subdued in Italy. Rome was facing a serious war not only with the Samnites, but also with the Etruscans, and with their combined forces.

One of the great battles in the war was fought at Sentinum. The Gauls, Umbrians, Etruscans, and Samnites had joined forces against the Romans. In charge of the Romans' four legions were Q. Fabius and P. Decius. Neither side was winning, when Decius ordered his cavalry to attack; they drove far into the enemy forces, but suddenly became alarmed by the enemy bearing down upon them in war chariots. The Romans had never encountered those war chariots before, and their horses bolted; the Roman cavalry fled. Failing to restrain their flight, P. Decius decided to make the ultimate sacrifice for the good of Rome. The Romans believed that a general could sacrifice himself and the enemy army (in Latin, *devovere* is the verb, *devotio* the noun) to the gods of the Underworld and to Mother Earth; Decius' father had sacrificed himself at the Battle of Veseris. Here is how the younger Decius did it:

He ordered the priest M. Livius to dictate the words for sacrificing himself and the enemy's army on behalf of the army of Rome. He then offered himself while saying the same prayers and wearing his toga in

ceremonial fashion, as his father had when he offered himself in the Latin War, at Veseris. Saying the solemn prayers, he had claimed that he was driving before himself terror, flight, slaughter, and bloodshed—all the wrath of the gods of the Underworld—and that he would pollute the standards, arms, and missiles of the enemy with awful destruction, and the place of his destruction would be the place of the destruction of the Gallic and Samnite armies. After bringing this curse on himself and the enemy, he turned his horse to where he saw the Gauls were the thickest, lashed his horse, and galloped into their midst, where he was killed by their deadly weapons. (Livy X.28.14–18)

Decius' death, according to the Romans, sealed the pact with the gods of the Underworld; the enemy army was therefore doomed. The Roman cavalry stopped its flight, and the Romans, hearing the priest say that the Gauls and Samnites now belonged to Mother Earth and the gods of the Underworld, renewed their attack. Helped by the Campanians who attacked the Gauls in the rear, the Roman and allied armies won the battle, killing the Samnite general and taking the Samnite camp.

The Samnites did not give up. They raised more armies and kept trying to spur those people subject to Rome to revolt. But they became desperate, for they were losing most of the battles and Samnium was being destroyed. As a last resort to defend their land and liberties, they created the Linen Legion:

There, almost in the middle of the camp, a place was closed off by wicker walls and covered by a linen roof, stretching out two hundred feet [61 meters] in all directions. Then, in accordance with an ancient book written on linen, a sacrifice was performed, with the priest being a certain Ovius Paccius, a man of great ancestry; he confirmed that he was performing this sacred rite in accordance with the most venerable religion of the Samnites, which their ancestors had used when they made their secret plans for taking Capua from the Etruscans.

Once the sacrifice had been completed, the commander sent out a messenger to order all those most noted for birth and accomplishments to appear before him; they were brought in one at a time. There was sacred paraphernalia lying around, to overwhelm one's mind with the presence of the sacred, and in the middle of the enclosed area were

altars, and around them were slaughtered victims and centurions with their swords drawn. More like a sacrificial victim than a participant in a sacred rite, each man was moved to the altar and there he was forced to swear that he would tell no one what he had seen and heard there. They also forced him to swear some terrible oath that called for a curse on his head, his family, and all his kin if he either fled from battle or did not immediately kill anyone he saw fleeing from battle. At first, some men refused to take that oath; they were instantly slain around the altar and, lying there dead among the various sacrificial victims, served as a warning to the others not to refuse to take the oath. Once the foremost Samnites had been bound by this oath, ten of them were named by the commander, and each of them was ordered to pick a man until their number amounted to sixteen thousand. They were called the Linen Legion after the covering of the enclosure where the nobles had taken their oaths. Special weapons and crested helmets were given to them, so that they would stand out from the others. (Livy X.38.5-13)

That was merely a part of the Samnite army that the Romans were facing at the Battle at Aquilonia. The battle started badly for the Romans, for the keepers of the sacred chickens (birds that showed the goodwill of the gods by eating their grain and the displeasure of the gods by not eating) had lied about the auspices; the general, hearing that the keepers had falsely reported good auspices, simply noted that the liars brought the gods' retribution on their own heads, and placed them in the front lines. Before the battle started, the keeper who had lied was killed by a randomly thrown javelin. "The gods are here in the battle," cried the general on hearing this news, "and the guilty one has his punishment!" (Livy X.40.13).

The battle was hard, and although the Romans were winning, they were facing a formidable enemy. The consul Papirius had told the other consul, who was besieging a town miles away, to send cavalry to help him; when the Romans were winning, their cavalry came to take the Samnites in the rear. The cavalry also fooled the Samnites, for riding with the cavalry were servants on donkeys, trailing leafy branches along the ground, to raise the kind of dust storm that a huge body of cavalry would raise; terrified at the

thought of being taken in the rear by a huge cavalry, the Samnites lost the battle.

The Romans did not stop with taking the Samnites' camp. They destroyed the Samnites' towns of Aquilonia and Cominium, and continued ravaging Samnite territory. The Samnites held out for three more years, finally seeking peace from the Romans in 290 B.C.

After establishing Roman supremacy in Samnium, the Romans changed the name of one of the Samnites' main cities, Malventum. This Oscan name in Latin sounds like "bad arrival," a terrible omen, so the Romans changed it to a more positive-sounding name, Beneventum, meaning "welcome."

The Romans continued their operations in Etruria for some time, mopping up the last remaining areas of rebellion, and beating back the Gauls. The other subject allies remained quiet for the time.

King Pyrrhus' Pyrrhic Victories

Tarentum, a Greek city in the instep of Italy, had been founded in 706 B.C. and still had close ties to cities in mainland Greece. As the Romans extended their influence into southern Italy in the fourth century, they signed a treaty with Tarentum. In 282 B.C., however, when some Roman ships passed through Tarentine waters, the Tarentines, thinking that the Romans had broken the treaty, attacked the ships; the ships were seized, their sailors taken captive, and their commander killed in battle. The Romans at that time were still fighting against the Etruscans and Gauls, and did not want another war on their hands. So they sent ambassadors to propose that the Tarentines simply release the captives and the ships, and pay restitution. The Tarentines refused. The Romans next sent the consul Aemilius Barbula with his army; his orders, however, were only to negotiate a peace with the Tarentines. The negotiations were unsuccessful.

The Tarentines, worried about facing a war with the increasingly powerful Rome, called upon the assistance of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, a kingdom in northwest Greece; he had a reputation as an excellent general. The Tarentines promised to provide him with an army of Tarentines, Lucanians, Samnites, and Messapians, all enemies of Rome, to augment the army that he would bring from Epirus.

Pyrrhus crossed over to Tarentum with twenty-five thousand soldiers and twenty elephants in 280 B.C. He immediately closed Tarentum's parks and *palaestrae* (places for exercise), and prohibited parties and festivals, maintaining that the Tarentines were not capable of saving themselves or of being saved: Apparently

they needed discipline. The Tarentines were not pleased, but Pyrrhus now controlled their city.

Pyrrhus and the Romans fought their first battle that same year at Heraclea. There the Romans encountered elephants for the first time, when Pyrrhus used them to smash the lines of the Roman legions. Reportedly the Romans lost seven thousand soldiers, while Pyrrhus lost four thousand of his best men. Pyrrhus won the battle, but at a great cost.

The Romans sent ambassadors to Pyrrhus to discuss the ransom for the Roman and Italian prisoners he was holding. One of the ambassadors was Fabricius, who was famous among his countrymen for his great poverty and his honesty. Meeting with the ambassadors, Pyrrhus was surprised to find that they were not seeking peace; after all, hadn't the Romans just been defeated? He offered to make peace and to release the prisoners, and he also offered "gifts"—bribes, in other words—to speed the negotiations along. Fabricius responded to Pyrrhus' offer:

"Pyrrhus, I applaud you for desiring peace, and I will bring it about, if it will help us. Since I am, as you say, an honorable man, you won't think it right for me to do anything against my country. Nor could I take any of those things which you are offering. I ask you, then, whether or not you really consider me an honorable man. After all, if I am not an honorable man, why do you think me worthy of gifts? If I am honorable, why do you urge me to take the gifts? Let me assure you that I have many things and that I do not need more. What I have now is enough, and I do not want anything that belongs to somebody else. Even though you consider yourself so rich, you are really very poor, for you would not have left Epirus and your possessions to come over here if you were satisfied with them and weren't trying for more. The man who lives in such a way and puts no end to his desire for more is the poorest of the poor." (Zonaras 8.4)

Pyrrhus then sent his officer Cineas to Rome with gifts to distribute to other Roman senators and their wives, figuring that the women would pressure their husbands into making peace with Pyrrhus. Influenced by the gifts, many Romans adopted a kinder attitude toward Pyrrhus, and the Senate met to discuss making peace. During the discussion of the terms, by which Pyrrhus would

pledge his support to Rome against the Gauls in exchange for Rome's grant of security and autonomy to Tarentum, the aged Appius Claudius Caecus (*caecus* means "blind") stood up and gave a stinging speech, which began with these words: "Romans, before this, I have been afflicted with bad luck as far as my eyes go, but now I am pained that, in addition to being blind, I am not deaf too, since I am hearing your disgraceful discussions and opinions which are destroying Rome's reputation." He concluded by saying, "Don't think that once you have made Pyrrhus your friend you'll get rid of him. Instead, you'll bring on yourself all those who have no respect for you, thinking that you're easy to beat, if Pyrrhus leaves without suffering the consequences for the wrongs that he has committed against you. He has even received pay, since the Tarentines and Samnites have come to sneer at the Romans" (Plutarch, *Pyrrhus* XIX.3).

Moved by this speech, the senators sent the reply to Pyrrhus that they would not negotiate peace with him until he had left Italy. While in Rome Cineas observed the Roman Senate, and on his return remarked to Pyrrhus that the Senate seemed like an assembly of kings, so great was the dignity and bearing of its members.

The next year, when Fabricius was consul, Pyrrhus' own doctor wrote to Fabricius offering to poison the king for the right price. Fabricius then wrote to Pyrrhus informing him of the doctor's offer to betray him: "You are waging war against just and honorable men, while you put your trust in evil and unjust men" (Plutarch, *Pyrrhus* XXI.2). Pyrrhus, in gratitude, released his Roman prisoners without ransom. The Romans, not wishing to receive any favors from him, released an equal number of prisoners whom they were holding.

Pyrrhus then proceeded north, where he and the Romans fought another battle in 279 B.C., at Ausculum. Again Pyrrhus won, but again at a heavy cost, for the Romans could, without great difficulty, replace the six thousand soldiers whom they lost in the battle, while Pyrrhus would be hard pressed to replace the thirty-five hundred men he had lost. Thus the term *Pyrrhic victory* came into English: Pyrrhus won the battles, but his heavy losses turned his victories into defeats, for he could not recover from his victories. Cineas had already warned Pyrrhus that he was fighting with the Lernaean Hydra, the many-headed creature that grows

two heads in the place of the one just cut off. When a friend congratulated Pyrrhus on his victory at Ausculum, Pyrrhus exclaimed, "If we beat the Romans in still another battle, we'll be completely destroyed."

Pyrrhus, disappointed in the progress of the war with Rome, and finding that the Italians subject to the Romans were not deserting them as he had thought they would, left for Sicily, where the Greek cities sought his help against Carthage. Pyrrhus won some battles in Sicily, but angered many with his despotic behavior, and returned to Tarentum in 276.

He faced the Roman armies again at the Battle of Beneventum, in 275. This time his elephants hurt him, by stampeding his own army. The Romans won the battle, and Pyrrhus speedily left Italy for Epirus, even leaving part of his army and one of his generals in Tarentum. That general and the Romans soon reached an understanding: He and his soldiers could leave unharmed if they gave Rome power over Tarentum. The general left, and the Romans made treaties with Tarentum and the other cities that had allied themselves with Pyrrhus.

Rome continued its battles against the other Italians who resisted Roman power. Within a few years, by 264 B.C., Rome was ruler of peninsular Italy.

HOW ROME MANAGED ITALY

Italy was by no means a unified country; the modern idea of a nation does not describe Italy in the third century B.C. In northern Italy were the Celtic-speaking tribes of Gauls, whose social organization (the only Gauls with political power were the priests and the knights) made them even more warlike than the Romans; their unsettled way of life was changing as they came increasingly under Roman domination. South of them, but north of Rome, were the Etruscans, a civilization that had long before declined; they spoke a non-Indo-European language and were completely alien to the Romans, although the Romans had learned a great deal from them. East of Rome, in the Apennine Mountains, were the Sabines and Aequi; to the southeast were the Samnites; close to Latium were the Volsci; and farther south were the Campanians. With the



Roman Italy. (Drawn by John Cotter)

exception of the Latins, Rome's non-Etruscan neighbors spoke Oscan and other languages distantly related to Latin. In southern Italy were the Greeks. The only people the Romans had much in common with were the Latins.

How did Rome manage to rule these diverse peoples? The situation was complicated, since various groups had different legal status with regard to the Roman government.

Civitas Romana (Roman citizenship). Roman citizens could vote, were expected to serve in the military, could marry other Roman citizens, had the right of engaging in commerce, and, after 167 B.C., did not have to pay direct taxes. Among the cherished rights enjoyed by Roman citizens was the *ius provocacionis*, the right to appeal a capital sentence to the Comitia Centuriata. *Civitas Romana* extended to those Romans who were living in Roman colonies. After the Great Latin War, the Romans granted full Roman citizenship to some Latin towns, to bind them more closely to Rome.

Latinum nomen ("Latin rights," defined as *civitas sine suffragio*, "citizenship without the vote"). Holders of *Latinum nomen* enjoyed all the rights of Roman citizens except for the right to vote. Until 187 B.C. holders of Latin rights could obtain full Roman citizenship by moving to Rome; then the Latin towns asked the Romans to abolish that policy, as too many Latins were deserting their towns for that purpose. Citizenship without the vote was granted to many Latin towns after the Great Latin War, and also to the inhabitants of Latin colonies. Those holding *Latinum nomen* in a way enjoyed dual citizenship, for they had civil rights in Rome and in their home cities, which were largely autonomous; one important restriction on their city's government was foreign policy.

Civitas sine suffragio. To bind the special non-Latin Italian towns and cities closer to Rome, and to reward them for good and faithful service, the Romans started granting the inhabitants *civitas sine suffragio*. Towns and cities that received that grant were called *municipia*. To further ensure that the *municipia*, which were largely autonomous, would pursue policies advantageous to Rome, the Romans granted full Roman citizenship to the elected officials of the *municipia*.

Socii italici (Italian allies). The treatment of other cities, towns, and villages depended upon the provisions of the treaty that Rome made with them. The people inhabiting these places were called *socii italici* and included many peoples who either were persistently hostile to Rome, like the Gauls, Samnites, and Etruscans, or showed little inclination to adopt Roman ways, such as the Greeks. Being free noncitizens, they had no civil rights in Rome, such as the *ius provocacionis*, although they enjoyed some basic rights through *ius gentium* (the law of nations), a type of international law. They could not marry Romans or Latins, or conduct business with Romans or Latins. They were liable to provide military service when the Romans called upon them for assistance, but they could not vote for or against their leader in war, or whether or not to go to war. Their towns were largely self-governing, with the important exception of foreign policy. They paid taxes to Rome.

Slaves and freedmen. Slaves were *res mancipi*, the property of their owner, and had no civil rights at all. They did enjoy a temporary respite from their servitude on the Saturnalia (a festival of Saturn, held on December 17), when they were allowed to speak their minds with impunity and to do as they liked. Inhabitants of Rome who were noncitizens, and who had never been slaves, were simply *liberi*, "free men." Ex-slaves were called *liberti*, "freedmen." Like slaves, they enjoyed no civil rights.

THE COLONIES

To keep subject peoples loyal, Rome and Latium established colonies throughout Italy. There were two types of colonies, Roman and Latin. The Roman colonies started out with two or three hundred families of Roman citizens; the Roman government sent out a dozen such groups to locations in Italy. Far more important are the Latin colonies. The Romans and Latins together sent out thirty of these, and they were much larger, containing eight to twenty thousand colonists. The colonies were established in areas that were hostile to Rome or slow to adopt Roman and Latin ways, such as Etruria, Gaul, and Samnium. The purpose was both to spread Latin and Roman civilization and, by a constant military presence, to keep the hostile peoples under control.

Roman citizens joining a Latin colony forfeited their Roman citizenship, but the sacrifice may have been worthwhile in view of the plentiful, fertile land they could farm in the colony. The joint Roman-Latin colonies were a huge success. The Latin language and civilization spread, and the military presence of the loyal colonists prevented rebellions among the subject peoples.

The Romans built excellent roads throughout the peninsula. The most important of these was the via Appia, the contract for which was awarded in 312 by then censor Appius Claudius Caecus. The roads facilitated communication with Rome, military transport, and also trade and social relations between the different peoples.

What Rome established in Italy was by no means a nation in the modern sense, for many Italians did not speak Latin or follow Latin and Roman customs; many could not vote for the leaders they would follow in war; many had no rights in Rome at all. Eventually all free-born Italians did gain full citizenship, but they had to become Latinized first, and then fight for some rights. Despite the appearance of tyranny in Rome's domination of the non-Latin Italians, Rome brought many good things to them, the greatest being peace. The centralized government of Rome eliminated the incessant warfare among the different peoples of Italy.

History Terms for Zoch, pgs. 76-93

The Samnites

First Samnite War

The Great Latin War

Titus Manlius Torquatus

The Rostra

Second Samnite War

The Caudine Forks

Passing Under the Yoke

Third Samnite War

Devotio and Publius Decius

Tarentum

King Pyrrhus of Epirus

Pyrrhic War

Civitas Romana

Latinum Nomen/Civitas Sine Suffragio

Socii Italici

Roman and Latin Colonies